

# SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILY FOCUS OCT/NOV 2012

An Update for South Dakota National Guard Service Members and Families  
800-658-3930

<https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx>

## AIRMEN AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

Hello all National Guard Service Members and Families! As we fall into a busy time of the year I wanted to take this opportunity to share what is happening at the South Dakota Air National Guard.

For those of you who don't know me, I have been with the South Dakota Air Guard Family Program for 4 years. My husband is in Security Forces as a Combat Arms Instructor. We have three children, Kyra 8, Jaden 5 and Ryker 6 months. They prove to keep us running and fill our lives full of joy! We are a true military family with deployments, TDY's and the support we get from our Air Guard family.

We are constantly deploying members out of our base on a weekly basis to support our mission overseas and state side. Since we only have one or two people leaving at a time this has proven to be very difficult on loved ones. However, by keeping them engaged and giving them hands on support, they often get through deployments and homecomings with very few bumps or bruises. However, we need to keep our services alive whether they be home stations or overseas, as we are here to serve our National Guard!

We are excited to welcome our newest family program member TSgt Brian Johnson. Brian comes from the Services field and will serve as the Family Program Assistant. We are happy to welcome him aboard as he will bring a lot of good experience with him on this journey. With his incoming we are sad to see our ADOS person SSgt Bridget VanLiere move on. However, we congratulate her on the new position with the Personnel Readiness office.

We are still working in collaboration with our Yellow Ribbon partners. We are striving to make sure our Airman and their families are met with the highest quality of care and concern. Mike Haugen is doing a wonderful job with communicating the importance of this program to our commanders.

I had the opportunity to be part of a training hosted at the Baltimore Air National Guard entitled Bystander Intervention Training. By June 30, 2011, all Airmen will have gained this strategy that motivates people who may see, hear or otherwise recognize signs of inappropriate situations and how to ACT! I am thrilled to be given the opportunity to teach this to our Airman. We all want to be good Wingman and this is just one more way to succeed!

Our Family Group for the Air has been actively planning their fiscal year. They have a holiday party coming up for our children of the ANG. They are also planning a volunteer workshop coming Oct 29<sup>th</sup>. They are bringing in speakers to help motivate our volunteer team and also gain insight from the commanders around the base.

In November we have our Annual Turkey Feed. Come join the fun! November 5<sup>th</sup> from 5-8 a meal will be served. All the trimmings included! The

Nikki Wajer

Airman and Family Program Manager

605-988-5962/605-310-6487

[nicole.wajer@ang.af.mil](mailto:nicole.wajer@ang.af.mil)

Rachel Vanderzee  
ANG Family Readiness Assistant  
605-988-5972

[rachel.vanderzee.ctr@ang.af.mil](mailto:rachel.vanderzee.ctr@ang.af.mil)

Brian Johnson  
ANG Family Program Assistant  
605-988-5511

[brian.johnson@ang.af.mil](mailto:brian.johnson@ang.af.mil)

## VA Streamlines Online Applications for Health Benefits Renewal

*Automated 10-10EZ Form Simplifies Updates*

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has automated its online Health Benefits Renewal (10-10EZ) form as part of its ongoing effort to streamline access to benefits.

"This action dramatically reduces the time it will take for enrolled Veterans to submit updates to their demographic information and further reduces access barriers to needed care for Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

Previously, Veterans filling out the online 10-10EZ were required to print a copy, sign it and send it to their local medical center before updates to their personal, insurance or financial information could occur. Veterans may now submit these updates online.

For additional information, go to [www.va.gov/healtheligibility](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility) or call VA's toll-free number at 1-877-222-VETS (8387). The online form is available at <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/Form/1010ezr.pdf>.

## SD NATIONAL GUARD YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE

Greetings from the SD Air National Guard! This fiscal year is just about over and a new year is about to begin. This is our second year with the Yellow Ribbon Program and I wanted to extend a huge "Thank You" to LTC Jacobson and his TEAM for their continued support they have provided to the ANG. A lot of really great people doing some really extraordinary things!

In July, I assumed the position as the MPSC Region 8 ANG rep in our region. I told Donna Crews, the head of my MPSC contracting position for the ANG YR Program, that with my acceptance of this position, this should prove to be "interesting." I am looking forward to the upcoming year in hopes that I can do a great job in serving as a representative for our Region 8 Team!

Some of the recent endeavors that we believe will enhance our current Yellow Ribbon and Family Programs would include my attending the 4 Lenses Training in Minneapolis in August. This three day training focused on the facilitation of the participants and allowed us to experience and discover the temperaments of not only ourselves but also experience the perspective temperaments of other people and how each of us has a unique style of how we go about our daily routines. Our temperaments significantly affect our personal and professional lives on a daily basis. Self awareness of ourselves and others helps us to become more cognizant of the people who live and work in our surrounding environment. This in turn provides a much deeper appreciation of the communication process when dealing with people both in and out of workplace.

A quote from Stephen R. Covey summarizes it the best, "All of us think we see the world as it is: when in reality, we see the world as we are."

I was also privileged enough to attend the Region 8 ANG Yellow Ribbon training in Seattle, Washington from August 22-26. The three day training included information on "maneuvering" through the JSS Website process, future funding issues and concerns of the YRP, 4 Lenses introduction and awareness level facilitation, and information regarding the highlights of the YRP best practices from across the nation. Overall the entire training was well worth the time and if you like fish and have never been to the "Fish Market" in Seattle, you need to go!

Take care, and have a Fabulous Day!

Mike Haugen  
ANG Yellow Ribbon Support Specialist  
605-988-5934/605-610-5269  
[michael.haugen@ang.af.mil](mailto:michael.haugen@ang.af.mil)

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## 3rd ANNUAL YELLOW RIBBON "DROP & SHOP"

All families of deployed Service Members, be sure to check your mailbox and RSVP for the 3rd annual Yellow Ribbon "Drop & Shop." We will be having a Sustainment Event on the 10th of December and afterward we will have youth and childcare available, so you can get all of your Christmas shopping done without the little ones.



## PII - What Is It and Why Is It Important to a Family Readiness Group?

**Personally Identifiable Information** or PII is information that identifies, links, relates, or is unique to, or describes an individual. For example, a Social Security Number, an age, a maiden name, a date and place of birth, marital status, home or office phone numbers, race, salary and/or any other demographic, personal, medical and financial information. This information can be used to distinguish, trace, or steal a person's identity. This can be personally and financially devastating.

In the military and with our military families we continually talk about Operational Security (OPSEC) which is imperative for all to practice to ensure the safety and security of our Service Members, but do we have good practices in place to protect our own and our family's identity? Do our children know how to protect their PII while on Facebook or purchasing iTunes or even when they answer the phone?

As Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) it is imperative to practice good measures of protecting each other's PII. Shred all old FRG Phone trees and mailing lists and when sending group distribution emails, send them blind carbon copy (bcc) to further protect Group member's privacy.

As leaders we need to educate and inform all FRG volunteers about the importance of practicing good PII control as they accomplish their important mission of informing, educating, and preparing families.

As Family Members it's OK to ask what measures are in place to protect personal information. We each have a responsibility to protect each other against Identity Theft.

### Types of Identity Theft



Lynn Wright

Phone: 605-737-6089

E-mail: [lynn.wright@us.army.mil](mailto:lynn.wright@us.army.mil)

Sheri Bartunek  
Phone: 605-737-6310

Email: [sheri.bartunek@us.army.mil](mailto:sheri.bartunek@us.army.mil)

Bethany Erck  
Phone: 605-357-2970

Email: [bethany.erck@us.army.mil](mailto:bethany.erck@us.army.mil)

## YOUTH PROGRAMS

Hello from the Youth Program! We hope that your autumn months are off to a great start!

September 17<sup>th</sup> was the 224<sup>th</sup> birthday of the US Constitution. The Military Family Network and K12 are offering military kids fun, free, and interactive online activities about the United States Constitution. There are six levels, tailored for grades K-12. This is a wonderful opportunity for military youth to learn the importance of the Constitution and to understand their part in their family's service to our country's founding principles. For further information, visit: <http://go.k12.com/niche/milwelcomepage/>

The Family Programs website has resources for military youth and families as well. Go to <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx> and click on "Youth Program" on the left-hand side, and then on the "Youth Resources" folder. The following resources are available:

*"How to Prepare Our Children and Stay Involved in their Education During Deployment"*

*"How Communities Can Support the Children and Families of those Serving in the National Guard or Reserves"*

*"Working with Military Children - A Primer for School Personnel"*

Please share these resources with others and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Thank you for all that you do for our military youth!

Taryn Broomfield,  
State Youth Specialist  
(w) 605-737-6919  
(c) 605-415-1807

[taryn.broomfield@us.army.mil](mailto:taryn.broomfield@us.army.mil)



TRICK or TREAT

Candice Twinnereim  
Deployment Youth Specialist  
(w) 605-345-4621 Ext. 7353  
(c) 605-787-3312

[candice.twinnereim@us.army.mil](mailto:candice.twinnereim@us.army.mil)

## Sesame Street has launched a Facebook page for military families!

This page is a place for the military family community to share their experiences and feelings with us and each other. More importantly, this page will be a place for us to share the latest news and initiatives from Sesame Workshop and our wonderful friends and partners, like you!

We invite you to be an active part of this community. Here is what you can do:

1. Connect us to your social media person
2. Have your organization's page LIKE our page on Facebook  
<http://www.facebook.com/SesameStreetForMilitaryFamilies>
3. Email us at [militaryfamilies@sesame.org](mailto:militaryfamilies@sesame.org) if you have any big news you want to share.

## OCTOBER IS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS MONTH

### Tips on communicating as a couple from Military OneSource

Learning to communicate well is one of the most important things any couple can do. Poor communication is the number one complaint of couples who split up, and it can make life much more difficult for those who stay together. You might try these ways of strengthening your communication skills.

Make time to talk to each other. Try to spend some time each day talking to each other – over a meal, after work, or before bed. This is so important that some busy couples find it helpful to mark time to talk in their calendars. One study found that just talking for as little as 15 minutes a day can help keep a relationship strong. (In contrast, couples who split up spend an average of four minutes a day or less in conversation.) During separations, talk by phone if possible, or use other forms of electronic communication to stay connected when you can't talk to each other.

Share your thoughts and feelings. One of the joys of being part of a couple is having someone with whom you can share your deepest thoughts and feelings. But after a while, you may fall into a rut. You may seem to talk only about things such as what to have for dinner or watch on television. If this happens, make an extra effort to talk about the things that matter most to you – the joys and sorrows you can't share (or can't share as well) with anybody else. If you're still having trouble, try taking normal conversations a step further. Talk about what you think about a story in the news, a good book you're reading, or how your supervisor makes you feel.

Listen carefully. Good communication involves not just speaking clearly but listening closely. This kind of "active listening" means giving each other your full attention and not interrupting. When you're talking about something important, turn off the television or radio and let voicemail take messages. One test to gauge how well you're listening is to pay attention to your thoughts while someone else is speaking. If you find yourself planning what you are going to say as soon as you have a chance to talk, you're probably not listening and need to refocus on the other person.

Show that you understand what you've heard. It's important not just to listen but to make it clear that you've heard what the other person is telling you. You can do this by reflecting back what you've heard through phrases such as, "So what you're saying is..." or "I want to make sure I understand you correctly. You feel that..." This way your spouse will know that you are truly listening to the conversation. Don't give advice or try to solve problems unless you are asked.

Offer frequent praise, support, and encouragement. Studies have shown that couples who stay together make many more positive comments to each other than negative ones. You might try to find something to praise every day, even if you've said similar things before. Your praise can be as simple as, "That was a fantastic dinner! I really appreciate all the effort you put into it." Or, "You were so patient when you helped Maria with her homework. I could see what a difference it made to her." If you make a habit of offering support, your words are less likely to meet with resistance when you have to bring up a tough subject.

Write notes or send email or text messages. Leave a note on the car seat that says, "I love you" or "Good luck with your presentation! I have faith that you'll do a great job." Send emails, text messages, or "I miss you" cards when your spouse is deployed or away on temporary duty.

Pay attention to your body language. Only about 7 percent of communication comes from your words; the rest is from your gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice. You can send positive messages by doing such things as looking the other person in the eye, giving hugs and kisses, and gently stroking the other person's arm or hair. You'll send negative messages if you engage in eye-rolling, finger-pointing, or walking away when your spouse is speaking to you.

**Military OneSource** This free 24-hour service is available to all active duty, Guard, and Reserve members (regardless of activation status) and their families. Consultants provide information and make referrals on a wide range of issues, including relationships. Free face-to-face counseling sessions (and their

## FREE ONLINE TUTORING!!!!!!

National Guard and Reserve families can now receive online tutoring and homework assistance from Tutor.com at no charge. This program allows K-12 and adult students to connect to a live tutor online at anytime for help with homework, studying, exam preparation, college coursework and more. Guard and Reserve families accessing services at Tutor.com are matched with one of more than 2,500 carefully screened experts who include certified teachers, college professors, graduate students, select undergraduates from accredited universities and other professionals. Tutor.com tutors are primarily based in the U.S. and Canada with some bilingual specialists located internationally. This service is offered at no cost to families of the Guard and Reserve members. Please visit [www.Tutor.com](http://www.Tutor.com) and click on Tutor.com for the military to take advantage of this wonderful benefit.

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